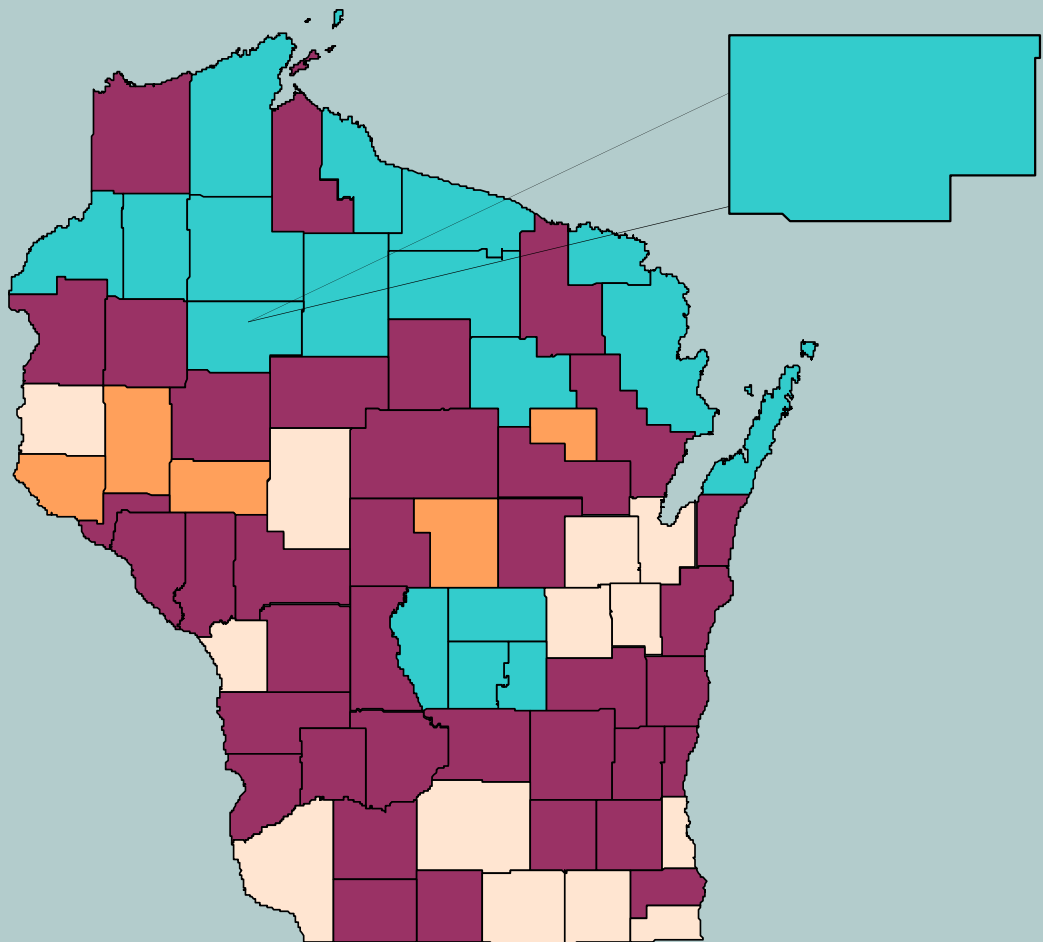


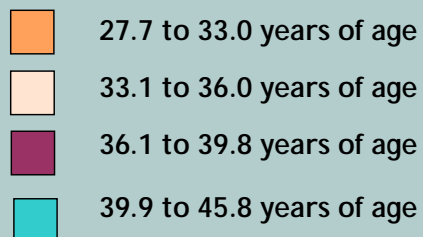
Rusk County

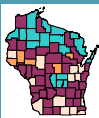
Workforce Profile

Median Age by County, 2000



Your complete guide to the state of the labor force of today and a glimpse into the economy of tomorrow.





County Population

From 1990 to 2000 the population in Rusk County increased from 15,079 to 15,347 according to Census 2000 information. That increase of 268 compensated for some of the loss in population experienced during the 1980s but not all of it. In 1980 the county population was 15,589. The county continued to add residents through the rest of 2000 and by the end of the year the population increased by another 67 residents, less than the pace of both the national and state increases in population.

The increase in population from 1990 to 2000 of 1.8 percent ranked 66th out of 72 counties in the state. Rusk County was one of the few counties in the state where the increase from natural causes exceeded the increase from migration. From 1990 to 2000 there were 1,857 births in the county that exceeded the number of deaths by 166. Meanwhile, net migration produced only 102 new residents during the decade, but that is a significant reversal of the loss of 1,241 from net migration recorded during the 1980s.

A net gain in population from migration means that more people moved to the county than moved out of the county. Census 2000 reveals that, since 1995, at least 2,590 individuals, roughly 18 percent of the population 5 years and older, lived in a different county. Of those new residents 36 percent moved from another state and 64 percent from

somewhere else in Wisconsin.

The census also reveals that the county population increased primarily from the addition of 187 in the white population although a few other ethnic groups have made Rusk County home. The number of Blacks in the county increased during the decade while the American Indian and Asian populations declined. In 2000, 98.3 percent of the population in Rusk County was white, an increase from 1990.

The greatest loss of population during the 1990s occurred in the Town of Grant, surrounding the City of Ladysmith which also lost population. The City of Ladysmith, the county's largest municipality, continued to lose residents through the end of 2000. The Village of Weyerhaeuser, with an increase of 70 residents during the last decade, had the second largest gain in population but with 353 residents is not on the list of largest municipalities in the county. The Town of Willard, with an increase of 91, had the largest gain in population.

Many of the residents that moved to the county during the 1990s were older but not so old that they were ready to retire. The greatest increase in the population occurred in the 40-49 year old age group, followed by the second largest increase in the 50-59 year old age group. Most of the increase was from an aging population, but not all of it.

(Continued on page 2)

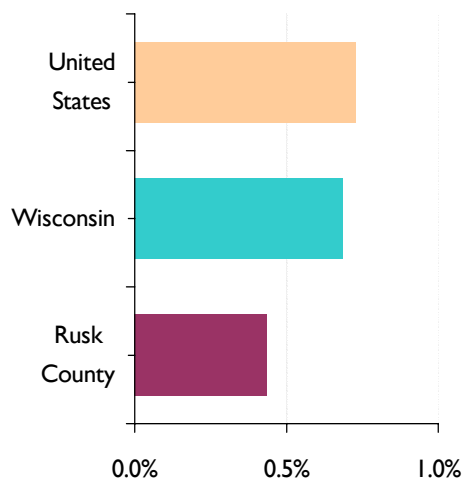
Total Population

	2000 Census	January 1, 2001 Estimate	Percent change
United States	281,421,906	283,474,000	0.7%
Wisconsin	5,363,675	5,400,449	0.7%
Rusk County	15,347	15,414	0.4%

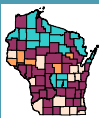
Ten Largest Municipalities

Ladysmith, City	3,932	3,923	-0.2%
Flambeau, Town	1,067	1,067	0.0%
Thornapple, Town	811	811	0.0%
Bruce, Village	787	790	0.4%
Grant, Town	767	768	0.1%
Marshall, Town	683	682	-0.1%
Atlanta, Town	627	631	0.6%
Stubbs, Town	587	585	-0.3%
Willard, Town	539	543	0.7%
Dewey, Town	523	528	1.0%

Population Growth 2000-2001



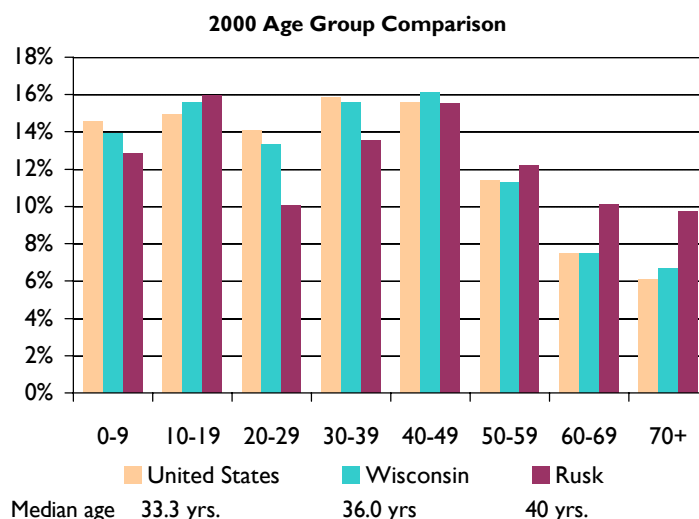
Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, Demographic Services, 2002



Both the increase in population from older people moving to the county and the aging of the existing population, impacted the median age in Rusk County. The median age increased from 35.1 years in 1990 to 40 years in 2000. The median age in Rusk County is 17th highest in the state and much higher than the state median age of 36.0 years and the national median of 33.3 years.

The higher median age means that there are more residents in the older population groups than in the younger age groups something apparent in the graph on the right. The county has a smaller share of population in the youngest age group than both the state and nation. The 10 to 19 year old group is nearly as large as in the state, reflecting the higher birth rates of the 1980s. However, once these teenagers graduate from high school they leave the area to continue their education or search for work. This loss is evident in the dramatic drop in 20-29 year olds.

At age 50 the county share of population is greater than in both the state and nation. This reflects the increase from residents moving to the area and the aging of the last of the baby boom population. Over the age of 60 the county has a much larger share of population than either the state or nation.

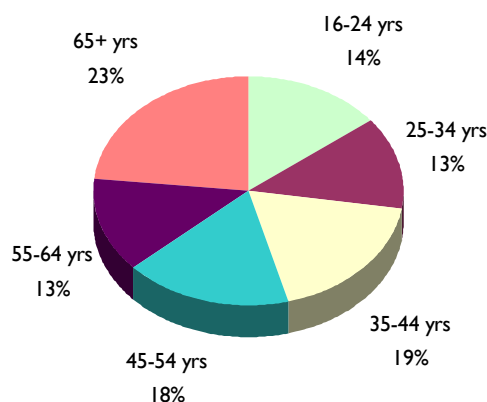


Source: US Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, *Census 2000*

The consequences of this disparity on the current and future labor force cannot be overstated. While the labor force has already shown signs of diminished growth, the full impact of fewer younger people available for the labor supply and an increasing older population, preparing to retire, will exacerbate the labor shortage. Compounding the problem of fewer workers is an aging population requiring more services that historically have been supplied by a young workforce.

County Civilian Labor Force

Rusk County Labor Force Age Groups



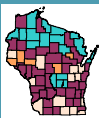
Source: US Dept. of Commerce, Census Bureau, *Census 2000*

The US Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) includes only the population 16 years and older as a potential source of labor. The BLS also excludes the population residing in institutions, such as nursing homes and prisons, and military personnel as a source of labor.

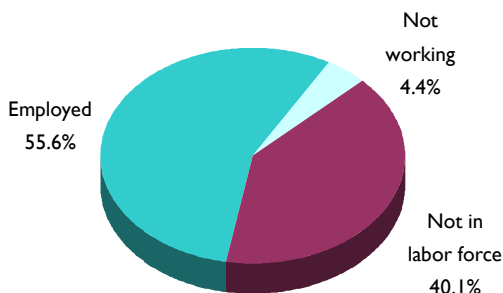
The Rusk County population in 2000 16 years and older totaled 15,112. This population comprises the potential labor force in the county even though 20 percent is 65 years and older. The population over 65 years old shares some common characteristics. To begin with, most of them are retired, even though a recent trend has retirees returning to the workforce to pursue new interests.

Other age groups also share characteristics. The 16-24 year olds are generally in school, work part-

(Continued on page 3)

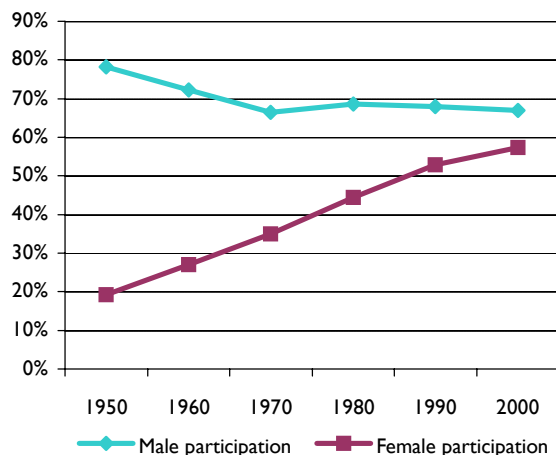


2001 Labor Force Participation



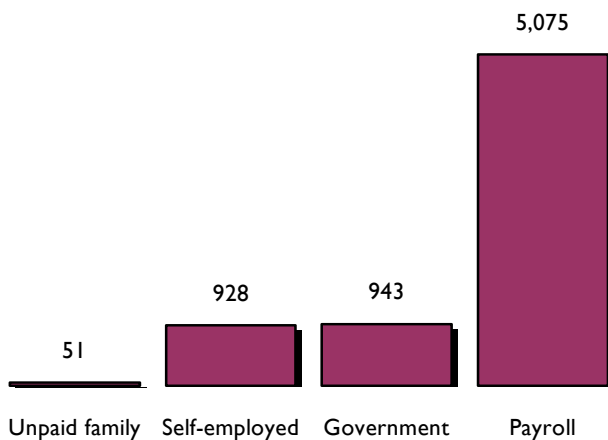
Source: Estimated from WI Dept. of Administration population estimates, Jan. 2001, US Census Bureau, and WI Local Area Unemployment Statistics.

Labor Force Participation of Male and Female Residents



Source: US Dept. of Commerce, Census Bureau, *Census 2000*

Type of Employment



Source: US Dept. of Commerce, Census Bureau, *Census 2000*

time and during summer breaks, and are starting their first jobs. This group is largely responsible for the increase in labor force during the summer months.

The next group, 25-34 year olds, are the workforce of the future, developing and honing skills, and moving into new careers. Many are starting and raising families, acquiring property, and working in at least one job if not two. Many of these same characteristics are shared by the next group, 35-44 year olds. This group is also preparing to send children to college, adding or upgrading housing, and is looking for ways to add to the family income. Labor force participation is often highest in this group.

By middle-age, workers begin to think about retirement, and during the 1990s, workers were retiring in their fifties. By 65 years old most of the population has retired.

Because each age group has different interests the number of individuals who are employed or at least look for work varies. Labor force participation rates by age groups from Census 2000 is scheduled for release in the fall of 2002.

An estimate of labor force participation rates in 2001 in Rusk County includes 55.5 percent of the labor force age population that worked, 4.4 percent of the population that were unemployed and 29 percent who choose not to work. The labor force participation rate in 2001 (the percent of the population 16 years and over that either worked or looked for work) was 59.9 percent.

Labor force participation, based on estimates from the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program, peaked in the county in the mid-1990s and has been falling steadily since then. Participation is currently less than in either the state (73.5%) or nation (66.9%). One of the primary reasons for lower participation is the large share of population over 65 years old, but a secondary reason is the availability of jobs.

Labor force participation varies not only by the age of the population but also by sex. Over the last fifty years, participation in the labor force of females has steadily increased while participation of men has declined. There are a number of factors that serve as explanations for these divergent trends, but the most comprehensive is the change in the county's industry mix away from goods-producing jobs towards service-producing jobs. Another factor is ac-

(Continued on page 4)



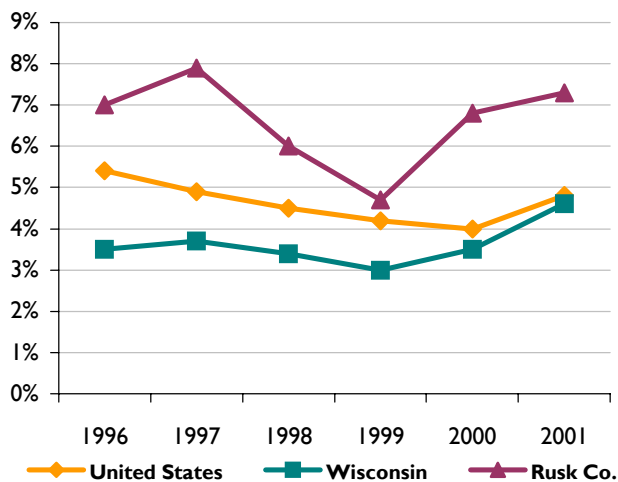
cess to retirement income, especially for men who have been in the workforce longer and in more permanent positions, than women are.

Labor force participants who work are engaged in several 'types of employment'. In Rusk County 73 percent of the employed population work for a private employer and receive a payroll check. Government workers also receive a payroll check, and comprise 14 percent of total employment.

Roughly 14 percent of workers in Rusk County are either self-employed or work as an unpaid family member. The share of self-employed and unpaid family members is significantly higher in Rusk County than in the state (6.4%), but has declined since 1990. Self-employed and proprietors tend to stay in the labor force longer than workers in payroll jobs do.

The number of self-employed and unpaid family members is a good reminder that total employment in the labor force includes more workers than just those employed in payroll jobs. It is one of the reasons that total employment in most counties is greater than the number of nonfarm wage and salary employment (see page 5).

Unemployment Rate Comparison

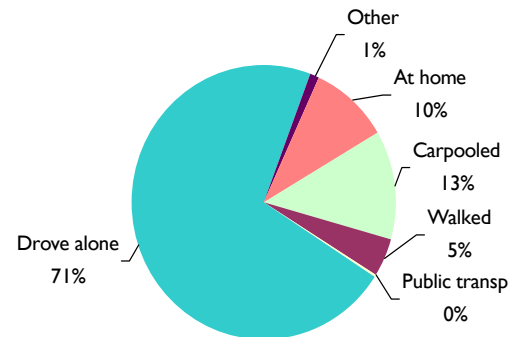


Rusk County Civilian Labor Force Data

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Labor Force	7,100	7,200	7,100	7,000	7,100	7,100
Employed	6,600	6,600	6,700	6,700	6,600	6,600
Unemployed	500	570	430	330	480	520
Unemployment Rate	7.0%	7.9%	6.0%	4.7%	6.8%	7.3%

Source: WI Department of Workforce Development, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, revised March 2002

County Travel-to-Work Patterns

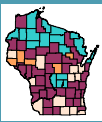


Source: US Dept. of Commerce, Census Bureau, Census 2000

An additional factor that effects the local labor force is the number of workers who commute into, or out of the county for jobs. Census 2000 revealed that nearly 18 percent of the workers living in Rusk County traveled outside the county for work. The specific destination of those workers from the census is not scheduled for release until 2003.

There has been little change in the number of employed residents in Rusk County during the last five years. Employment did rise some in 1998 and 1999 when manufacturing employers added extra workers. During those years the average unemployment rate declined, but it never dropped below either the state or national rates. The annual average unemployment rate is higher in Rusk County because of the number of seasonal jobs, especially with manufacturers. In 2001, the unemployment rate peaked at 12.5 percent in February, then declined to a low of 4.3 percent in September.

Most of the workers in Rusk County drive alone to a job, while 13 percent, higher than in the state, were part of a car pool. Roughly 10 percent of those employed work at home, nearly triple the share in the state. And, with little public transportation, it is no surprise that so few take advantage of it. Statewide, only two percent use public transportation.



County Industry Employment

Nonfarm Wage and Salary Employment

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	Percent change	
							1 year	5 year
Total	5,316	5,431	5,704	6,071	6,002	5,987	-0.3%	12.6%
Goods Producing	2,044	2,130	2,386	2,653	2,559	2,482	-3.0%	21.4%
Construction & Mining	86	143	232	312	215	196	-8.7%	127.7%
Manufacturing	1,957	1,987	2,154	2,342	2,344	2,285	-2.5%	16.8%
Durable	1,489	1,523	1,720	1,909	1,910	1,850	-3.1%	24.3%
Nondurable	468	464	434	432	434	435	0.2%	-7.1%
Service Producing	3,273	3,301	3,318	3,418	3,443	3,505	1.8%	7.1%
Transportation, Communications & Utilities	241	227	239	250	236	218	-7.8%	-9.5%
Total Trade	832	821	818	831	895	877	-2.0%	5.5%
Wholesale	116	113	115	119	121	132	8.9%	13.3%
Retail	715	707	703	712	774	746	-3.7%	4.2%
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	119	125	131	124	128	129	1.2%	8.5%
Services & Misc.	852	913	940	934	880	909	3.3%	6.8%
Total Government	1,229	1,215	1,190	1,279	1,303	1,371	5.2%	11.5%

Source: WI Department of Workforce Development, Nonfarm wage and salary estimates, revised March 2002

Nonfarm wage and salary employment is an estimate of the number of jobs generated by employers who are located in Rusk County. All payroll jobs are counted and include occupations from managers to laborers who work full- and part-time, in permanent, temporary and seasonal positions, and are paid hourly, through commissions or salaries, or by piecework. Employment is classified using the Stan-

dard Industrial Classification (SIC) of the primary product of the employer.

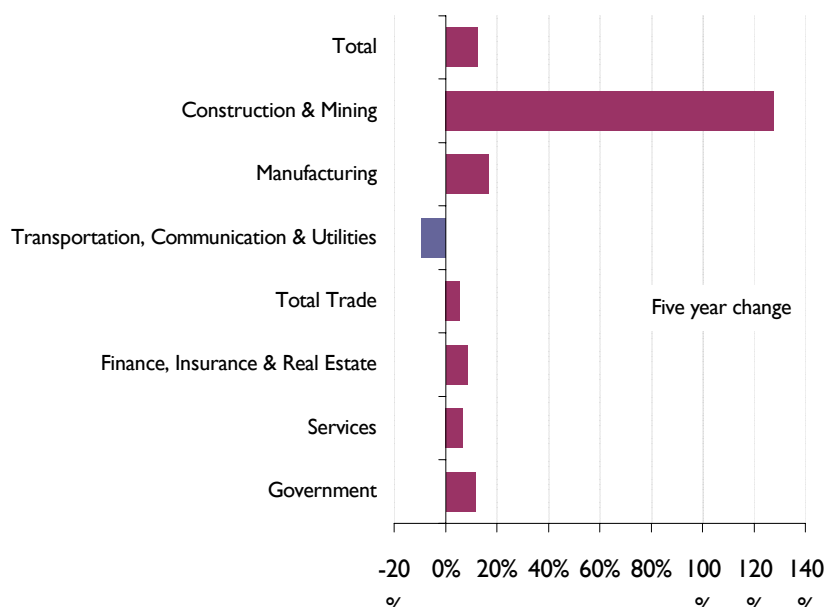
There were 5,987 nonfarm wage and salary jobs in the county in 2001, a year when total employment in the labor force (county residents) was 6,600. With over 1,200 workers traveling out of the county for jobs (Census 2000) and some residents working more than one job, local employers still need workers from other counties to fill jobs. Most of those workers commute from Chippewa, Price, Sawyer and Taylor counties.

Total nonfarm employment increased 12.6 percent from 1996 to 2001, exceeding the increase statewide of 8.7 percent. However, in the last year a loss of 0.3 percent matched the loss statewide. Most of the reduction in jobs in the last year occurred with manufacturing employers. Over the five-year period, however, manufacturers added 330 jobs to the local economy. In spite of the recent reduction, manufacturing jobs still comprise 38 percent of nonfarm employment in Rusk County and over half those jobs are with lumber and wood producers.

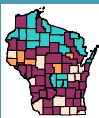
Lumber and wood manufacturers comprise the largest industry group in the

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Employment Change by Industry Division: 1996 to 2001



Source: WI DWD, Nonfarm wage and salary estimates, revised March 2002



Top 10 Employers

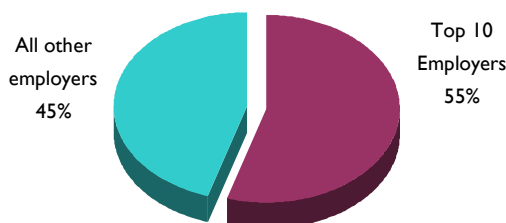
Company	Product or Service	Size
Weather Shield Mfg Inc.	Lumber & wood: windows & doors	500-999
Jeld-Wen Inc.	Lumber & wood: windows & doors	500-999
County of Rusk	Executive & general government	500-999
Allen-Bradley Co. LLC	Electric components: control devices	250-499
Artisans Inc.	Apparel products: screenprinting	100-249
Ladysmith-Hawkins School District	Education	100-249
Indianhead Community Action Agency	Social services: community action	100-249
School District of Flambeau	Education	100-249
Mount Senario College	Education	100-249
Bruce Public School	Education	100-249

Top 10 Industry Groups

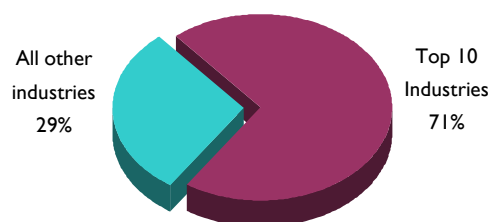
Industry Group	March 2001		Numeric change	
	Employers	Employees	1-year	5-year
Lumber and Wood Products	13	1,246	3	462
Educational Services	6	714	3	23
Executive, Legislative, and General	30	693	31	39
Social Services	10	333	*	*
Electronic & other Electric Equipment	*	*	*	*
Apparel and other Textile Products	*	*	*	*
Eating and Drinking Places	25	248	*	*
Food Stores	*	*	*	*
Furniture and Fixtures	3	139	-4	*
Health Services	12	139	0	-51

*data suppressed to maintain confidentiality

Top 10 Employers' Share of Nonfarm Employment



Top 10 Industry Group Share of Nonfarm Employment



Source: WI Department of Workforce Development, ES-202 file tape, December 2001

county with over 1,200 jobs. In the last five years they added over 400 jobs, more than was added by manufacturers as a group. Employment with non-durable goods employers declined during the five-year period.

Employment in most of the other major industry divisions increased from 1996 to 2001. Of note are the increases in construction and government. Construction employment increased with mine reclamation and has not declined since then. Government

employment in Rusk County includes work with the county-operated hospital and local schools districts. Additional jobs in these two groups within government account for much of the growth.

The ten largest employers, out of 377, represent many of the industry groups on the second list above, and provide over half the jobs in Rusk County. Industries not represented by employers, especially food stores and eating and drinking

(Continued on page 7)



places, include of many smaller establishments who together provide many jobs in the county. In Rusk County that also applies to the health services industry group since the hospital and nursing home are included with county employment.

The absence of a hospital and nursing home in the services industry division is apparent in the graph below. Employers in the services industry division provide only 13 percent of all the jobs in Rusk County and only 9.7 percent of total payroll. And, without the numerous professional and technical occupations in health care, annual average wages of

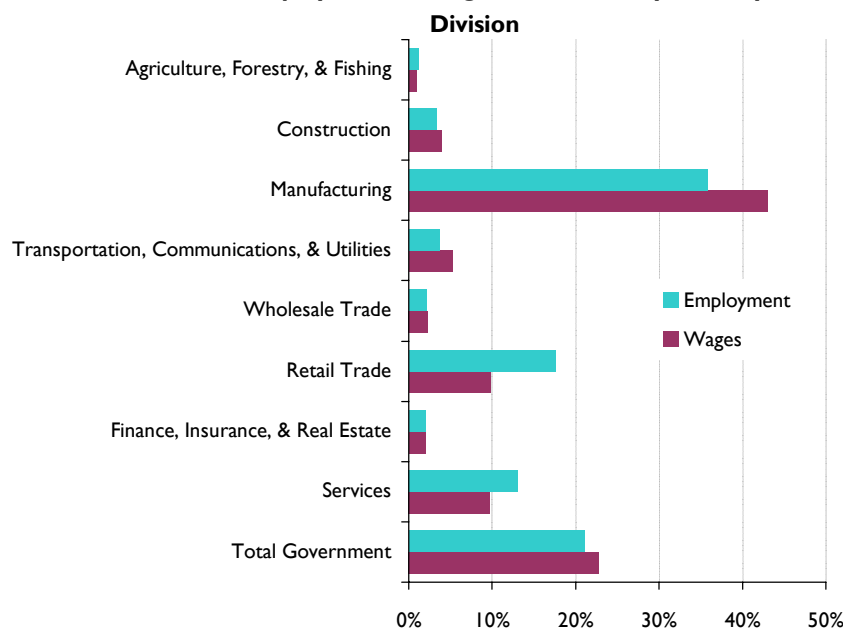
\$16,757 are only 58 percent of wages paid to services industry workers statewide.

The dominance of manufacturing is also reflected in this graph. The total payroll in 2001 from employers in the manufacturing industry of \$58,363,162 was 43 percent of the total payroll from all county employers of \$135,602,100. Average annual wages for manufacturing workers, however, were a distant second to those paid to workers in transportation, communication and utilities and were only 69 percent of the annual wages for similar work in the state. In addition to lower hourly wages, many production workers, especially those in lumber and wood, experience routine seasonal layoffs that reduce the total number of hours (paid) in a year.

Wages paid to workers in transportation, communication and utilities were closest to those paid to workers in similar jobs in the state; while the greatest disparity in wages is found in finance, insurance and real estate. There are no corporate offices with the higher paying professional jobs in Rusk County and many of the jobs are part time.

The annual average wage in the county of \$22,661 was only 73 percent of the state average, even though the increase of 21.2 percent over five years exceeded the five-year increase in the state of 18.8 percent.

2001 Employment & Wage Distribution by Industry



Annual Average Wage By Industry Division

	Rusk Co. Annual Average Wage	Wisconsin Annual Average Wage	Percent of State Average	1-year percent change	5-year percent change
All Industries*	\$ 22,661	\$ 30,922	73.3%	2.6%	21.1%
Agriculture, Forestry, & Fishing	\$ 18,832	\$ 22,565	83.5%	2.5%	21.7%
Construction	\$ 26,614	\$ 39,011	68.2%	11.2%	57.7%
Manufacturing	\$ 27,249	\$ 39,739	68.6%	3.9%	21.4%
Transportation, Communications, & Utilities	\$ 32,182	\$ 36,639	87.8%	3.4%	35.2%
Wholesale Trade	\$ 24,502	\$ 40,521	60.5%	5.4%	34.7%
Retail Trade	\$ 12,637	\$ 14,596	86.6%	1.5%	21.1%
Finance, Insurance, & Real estate	\$ 22,979	\$ 40,933	56.1%	5.2%	27.1%
Services	\$ 16,757	\$ 28,775	58.2%	-3.0%	7.7%
Total Government	\$ 24,435	\$ 33,785	72.3%	2.9%	19.6%

* Mining excluded from table since wages were suppressed to maintain confidentiality in every county

Source: WI DWD, *Employment, Wages, and Taxes Due* covered by Wisconsin's U.C. Law, 2002



Occupation and Education Characteristics of County Population

The previous pages explored jobs classified by industry, but jobs are also classified by occupation. Data on occupation employment is more difficult to access, especially at the county level, but the census offers a glimpse into the types of occupations in Rusk County. The distribution of occupations reflects the employment of all resident workers, including those that are self-employed and work outside of the county.

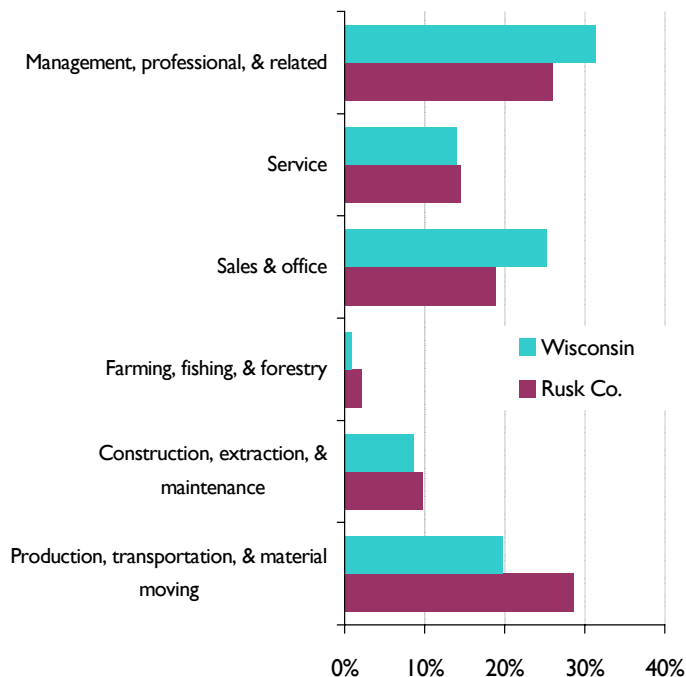
The largest group in Rusk County includes production occupations. This is consistent with the industry composition in the county even though this data includes residents who commute to jobs outside the county.

The second largest group in the county, and largest in the state, is management, professional and related occupations. The management, professional and related occupations in Rusk County primarily include jobs as teachers and health care professionals. These jobs are found with employers in the services industry division and local school districts and require education and training beyond high school. Nationally, 80 percent of jobs in this group require post-secondary education, while in Wisconsin, roughly 78 percent do.

In Rusk County only 36 percent of the population 25 years old and over have some education beyond high school and only 11 percent hold a college degree. Statewide, 22.5 percent of the same population group holds a college degree (Census 2000).

Roughly 25 percent of the population has 1-3 years of post-secondary education that could in-

Employment by Occupation Group: 2000

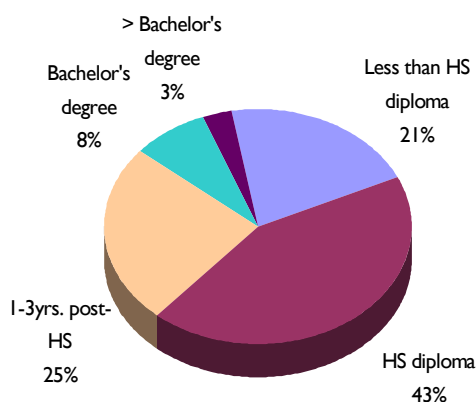


US Department of Commerce, Census 2000

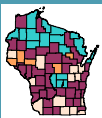
clude some college with no degree, an associate degree, or technical college training. Workers in this group find employment in all occupational groups including the production, transportation, and material moving occupational group, the largest in the county. Employers now expect workers in these occupations to have some training beyond high school. The same is true of many of the sales and office occupations, the third largest group. Workers in these occupations, such as accounting clerks, advertising assistants, technical sales representatives, and general office clerks, are employed in all industries. Many of the skills needed by production and clerical workers are learned at the local technical colleges that serve the residents of Rusk County.

The fourth largest group is service occupations. This group is slightly larger in the county than in the state and has the fewest occupations that require training beyond high school. Workers in service occupations comprise 14.5 percent of the workforce in Rusk County compared with 14 percent in the state. Service occupations include nurse aides, janitors, kitchen workers, waiters, and police and firefighters. Wages for many of these jobs are low and workers often work less than 40 hours per week.

Education Attainment in 2000



Source: US Dept. of Commerce, Census Bureau, Census 2000



County Income Information

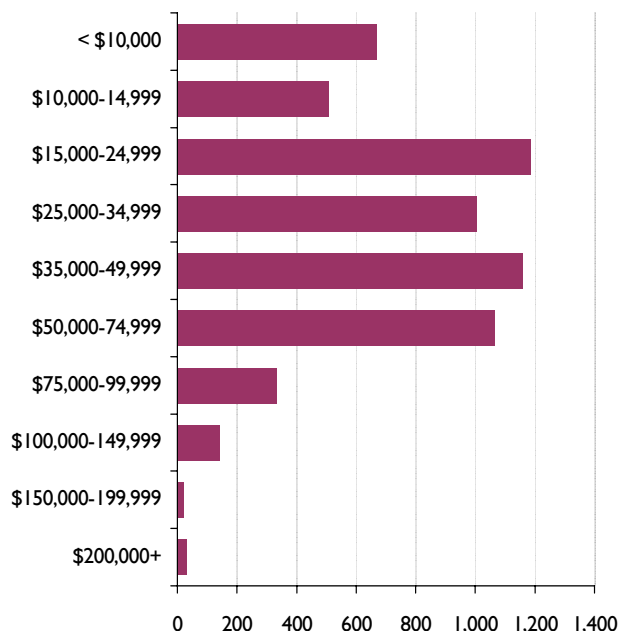
The median household income in 1999 (last full year of income data used for census) in Rusk County of \$31,344 was only 72 percent of the state median income of \$43,791. Only three percent of the households in the county had an annual income over \$100,000 while over 19 percent earned less than \$15,000. So many households with low income contribute to a poverty rate in the county of 11.8 percent that is higher than the rate in the state of 8.7 percent.

Household income is higher than either per capita personal income or annual average wages because households generally include more than one person (the average in Rusk County is 2.5 persons per household) and workers often hold more than one job. In addition to wages from all workers, household income includes earnings from self-employment, proprietorships, investments, assets, social security, retirement, Veteran's benefits, welfare, and unemployment benefits.

Per capita personal income (PCPI) is the total income in an area, \$294,666,000 in Rusk County, divided by the total population. PCPI in Rusk County in 2000 of \$19,191 was 68 percent of the PCPI in Wisconsin and 65 percent of the United States. In the last year it increased only 3.7 percent, less than both state and national gains.

Incomes are lower in Rusk County, not only because of lower wages but also because of a larger elderly population living on fixed incomes. Income

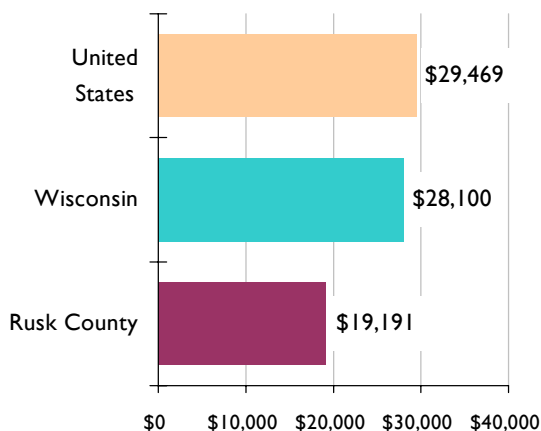
Households by Income Range
Median household income in Rusk Co. \$31,344



Source: US Dept. of Commerce, Census Bureau, *Census 2000*

from government retirement and medical payments comprises 79 percent of transfer payments and transfer payments in the county are a much greater share than in either the state or nation. The population living on fixed income will only increase in the next ten years.

Per Capita Personal Income 2000



Source: US Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis

Components of Total Personal Income: 2000

